

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

K S of West Virginia Company Ltd

West Virginia Manufacturing Extension Partnership

K.S. Gets New Tools In Pursuit Of Quality

Client Profile:

K. S. of West Virginia Company, Ltd. is a manufacturer of small metal stampings, injection molded parts, and assemblies for the automotive industry. The privately held firm, with a total employment of approximately 120, is located in Ravenswood, West Virginia.

Situation:

K.S. of West Virginia (K.S.) utilizes a quality management system compliant to the QS-9000 standard. The company intends to pursue formal registration in the future, although for now, compliance is satisfactory to both the firm and its customers. The West Virginia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (WVMEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, has been working with the client for over a year on issues dealing with both quality assurance and quality control, in preparation for formal registration.

Solution:

In the latest phase of QS-9000 preparation, WVMEP provided assistance on potential Failure Mode and Effects Analysis (FMEA) situational preparedness documentation, with the initial emphasis placed on formal training. Eleven K.S. employees and two representatives of a major customer took part in the FMEA training offered by WVMEP. The organization designed this training to place particular emphasis on the formal requirements of the FMEA standard, including any procedural aspects.

WVMEP followed this training with an evaluation of the methods currently in place for implementation of this technique. The company was required to document corrective action and continuous improvement methods as part of the evaluation. The evaluation of the activities involved in the FMEA process as currently practiced by the client revealed an established method with only minor nonconformance relative to the standard. WVMEP helped K.S. specify each nonconformance in detail and implement the courses of corrective action recommended.

Results:

Completed another step in the effort to become QS-9000 certified.
Conducted an evaluation of noncompliances and took corrective actions.

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Trained 11 employees in situational preparedness.

Testimonial:

"The services of the West Virginia Manufacturing Extension Partnership were instrumental in improving our understanding of Potential Failure Mode and Effects Analysis. The audit showed us ways of strengthening the way we use this tool that were, best of all, found to be inexpensive to implement. I feel that we now are better able to look at our processes and predict the things that can go wrong than we were before."

Jeffrey A. Easter, Quality Manager